

# **Special Education Advisory Panel**

## **Minutes**

### **April 13, 2007**

#### **Members Present**

Bev Woodhurst  
Cathy Einhorn  
Ray Wicks  
Heidi Atkins Lieberman  
Sue Alderton  
Stephanie Wickers  
Dorothy Parks

Doreen Frappier  
Karen Coleman  
Martha Crabtree  
Theresa Valdes  
Patti Simcosky  
Jerry Neal  
Shirley Woods

Trish Grassa  
Pat Jackson  
Joan Zavitsky  
Sherri Tucker  
Eileen Huth  
Melissa Frazier

#### **Members Not Present**

Jeaneal Alexander  
Kristen Callen  
Amanda Coleman  
DeAnn Fiedler  
Diane Francis

Marnie Gustafson  
Nina Murphy  
Kim Oligschlaeger  
Lynda Roberts  
Mary Kay Savage

Kenneth Southwick  
Teresa VanDover  
Stephen Viola

#### **DESE Staff Present**

Pam Williams, Coordinator, Special Education Services  
Mary Corey, Director, Special Education Data Coordination Section  
Margaret Strecker, Director, Special Education Compliance Section  
Randy Rook, Director, Federal Grants Management Section, Division of School Improvement

#### **Guests**

Eric Remelius

Copies of handouts distributed at the meeting are available at:

<http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/AdvisoryPanel/94142meetings.html>.

**Call to Order/Introductions/Approval of Minutes** – Bev Woodhurst called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. Jerry Neal made a motion to approve the minutes as written. Cathy Einhorn seconded the motion. Motion passed with four abstentions. Minutes were approved.

**New Assistant Commissioner Addresses the Panel** – Heidi Atkins Lieberman, new Assistant Commissioner for the Division of Special Education, spoke briefly to the Panel. She indicated her goal is to determine how DESE can better serve students and schools. She indicated she has been meeting with Division staff and stakeholder groups collecting input from them.

**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)/No Child Left Behind (NCLB)** – Randy Rook, Director of the Federal Grants Management Section in the Division of School Improvement, presented information to the panel on AYP, NCLB (<http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/fedprog/instrucimprov/index.html>), and highly qualified teachers (HQT) (<http://www.dese.mo.gov/divimprove/fedprog/grantmgmnt/>).

NCLB is the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). NCLB includes significant new accountability measures for all public schools. It is based on the goal that all children will be proficient in reading and math by 2014. The law requires all children be taught by “highly qualified” teachers. A reauthorization of NCLB, later this year or sometime next year, may have some impact on several items. One such change may give districts flexibility to transfer federal funds between different programs within the district (with the exception of Title I funds).

AYP is a district requirement and uses MAP scores to determine progress. Accountability is a large part of NCLB. Districts must have a target of having all students academically proficient by 2014. Any school that fails to achieve AYP for two consecutive years in the same subject area will be identified by the state as “needing improvement.”

Highly qualified teachers (HQT) must have a bachelor’s degree, be fully certified by the state, and demonstrate knowledge of content by passing a “rigorous test.” In Missouri, this is done through the Praxis II test. The U. S. Department of Education indicated that Missouri was not doing an adequate job in determining HQT and required DESE to send out a form, called the HOUSSE form, to over 16,000 veteran teachers in Missouri to determine if they were HQT or not. NCLB allows veteran teachers to determine if they are HQT by using the HOUSSE form if they have not taken the Praxis II. The special education portion is very complex. One problem is that many special education teachers have taken the Praxis but in the area of special education, not in an academic area. Another issue is some special education teachers do not have five years of experience which is a requirement. DESE is reviewing these issues.

The U. S. Department of Education has provided a guidance document for states dealing with the two percent issue. To review the SELS message DESE sent regarding this, go to:

<http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Administration/ListServPostings/LS04.06.07-2.html>.

**Future Panel Meetings** – Future meetings will be August 17, October 12, and December 7 (each at the Truman Building in Room 500).

### **DESE Update**

**Final Part B APR/SPP** – Margaret Strecker presented the Panel with updated information about the APR and SPP (two handouts). She indicated that Division staff review these documents regularly, reviewing the strategies, targets, and data to see how the state is doing. To view the documents or for more information, go to <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/SPPpage.html>.

**IMACS Demonstration** – Mary Corey presented information on the Improvement Monitoring Accountability and Monitoring System (IMACS) <http://dese.mo.gov/divspeced/Compliance/Monitoring/index.html>. The system will be used for special education monitoring self-assessment and grant application purposes. The special education consultants at the RPDCs are the main contacts for districts writing their improvement plans. The consultants provided training for districts needing to write improvement plans. A manual has also been developed. There is also a compliance review portion in the IMACS. Districts to be monitored will be asked to enter information for the student files to be reviewed. The indicators districts will use when entering the student file information will be specific to that district and will be specific to the student’s age and disability category.

**Incentive Grant Update** – Pam Williams indicated the due date for grants was extended to April 16, 2007. The grants will be scored next week. DESE will provide an update at the next panel meeting.

**Proposed Part B State Regulations** – Pam Williams indicated the proposed Part B State Regulations will be presented to the State Board next week. The Division received several comments.

**SPDG Grant** – Pam Williams indicated that DESE submitted their application for the SPDG grant to the U. S. Department of Education (due March 27). The Division probably will not find out if awarded the grant until late summer or early fall. The proposal is for five years asking for \$1.5 million per year. The purpose of the grant is to get districts up-to-speed using a three-tiered model of intervention for pre-kindergarten to grade 12.

**Working Lunch - The subcommittees met for approximately one hour.**

### **Subcommittee Reports**

**Evaluation** – Joan Zavitsky indicated they have a couple of outstanding questions about the bylaws. DESE is checking to see what panels in other states do and will report findings at next month’s meeting.

**Rules and Regulations** – Ray Wicks indicated they discussed the Division’s hearing process and the subcommittee’s responsibilities. He indicated that at the last meeting he asked panel members to attend the

public hearings for the state plan. Joan Zavitsky and Ray attended the hearing in St. Louis and Shirley Woods attended the one in Kansas City. No one else indicated they attended a state plan hearing.

Ray indicated he talked with Heidi regarding the responsibilities of the subcommittee and the issue of whether this includes proposed legislation. Heidi's response was that regulations indicate the panel is to give DESE advice about proposed rules and regulations (state plan). If DESE does propose a legislative change, it is sent as a draft proposal to the state agency for review. If there is interest, the Governor's office will decide whether it proceed and will find a sponsor. The ownership of the bill is no longer with DESE. Once the bill is filed, individuals may make comments on the bill to their senator or representative.

Ray asked that the subcommittee be given ample opportunity by DESE to comment considering the panel does not meet but every other month.

**Monitoring** – Dorothy Parks indicated they nothing to report.

**Programs** – Martha Crabtree felt it would be a good idea for DESE to check into the idea of using the IMACS system (sample student file review portion) as a training tool for universities to use with their students.

Martha asked about the status of the speech implementers' issue. Heidi indicated it will probably be a very long time before DESE receives a response from the Attorney General's office and at this time nothing has changed. As soon as DESE gets a response, we will share it with the panel.

Martha asked about the comments to the proposed state regulation changes concerning special education teacher caseload. Pam Williams indicated there were not many responses but the ones received were positive.

Martha requested DESE to present information about Missouri career centers and how accessible they are for students with disabilities. Heidi we will ask someone from the Career Education Section to come to a future meeting.

Martha asked about the status of virtual schools and how students on homebound could benefit. Heidi indicated no contract has been awarded yet. For more information, go to: <http://dese.mo.gov/divimprove/curriculum/movip/>

Martha also asked about the status of the St. Louis City School District. Heidi indicated there will be a transition board appointed to run the St. Louis City School District. When a school is unaccredited, students may choose to attend another school district on a tuition basis.

**Nominations** – Trish Grassa indicated that DESE is in the process of appointing individuals to fill the two parent vacancies. Elections will be held at the next panel meeting. Email nominations to Trish Grassa.

**Public Comment** – Trish Grassa indicated their subcommittee suggested at the last meeting that DESE provide a button on the panel's web page to allow individuals to comment on specific topics (selected by the panel). DESE indicated that the comments would have to go directly to the panel. Trish indicated a new topic needs to be selected since the previously selected topic has been addressed. Heidi suggested Trish forward the first topic to Lina. The comments from the web page will go to Trish's email address.

**Adjournment** – Shirley Woods made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trish Grassa seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.